

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage comprising a mixture of a meat emulsion and a fermented milk product having a pH of 4.6 or more, wherein said fermented milk product is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the meat emulsion and said mixture has a pH of about 5.5 or more, and wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 2 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said fermented milk product has a pH of 4.8 or more.

Claim 3 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said fermented milk product has a pH of 5.2 or more.

Claim 4 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said fermented milk product is selected from one of more of mild yogurt, buttermilk, soured cream milk, soured milk, fresh cheese, fermented whey and kefir.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mixture comprises 60 to 90% by wt of said meat emulsion.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mixture further comprises up to 10% by weight of various spices.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) A cooked sausage ~~as claimed in claim 7~~ comprising a mixture of a meat emulsion and a fermented milk product having a pH of 4.6 or more, wherein said fermented milk product is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the meat emulsion and said mixture has a pH of about 5.5 or more, wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the fermented milk product, and wherein said mixture comprises up to 10% by wt of a prebiotic additive.

Claim 9 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 8, wherein said prebiotic additive is inulin.

Claim 10 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said meat emulsion comprises red meat or poultry.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented) A method of making a cooked sausage which comprises forming a mixture of a meat emulsion and a fermented milk product having a pH of 4.6 or more, in which mixture said fermented milk product is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the emulsion, forming the mixture into a sausage, and thereafter cooking the sausage; wherein the pH and proportion of the fermented milk product in the mixture is such that the pH of the mixture is 5.5 or more, wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 12 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said fermented milk product has a pH of 4.8 or more.

Claim 13 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said fermented milk product has a pH of 5.2 or more.

Claim 14 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said fermented milk product is prepared by inoculating a milk product with a starter culture, monitoring the pH of the fermented milk product, and quenching fermentation of the fermented milk product when the pH reaches a desired value.

Claim 15 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein fermentation of the milk product is quenched by cooling the fermented milk product to a temperature in the range -2 to 6°C.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said starter culture comprises a slow working starter culture.

Claim 17 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the mixture of meat and fermented milk product is formed into a sausage by extrusion through a stuffing horn into a flexible casing.

Claim 18 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said meat emulsion comprises an emulsion of finely comminuted meat and is formed by comminuting whole muscle, ground, minced or mechanically separated meat in the presence of said fermented milk product.

Claim 19 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said fermented milk product is added to the meat at a temperature of 0 to 6°C.

Claim 20 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said meat has a temperature prior to comminution of 0 to 8°C.

Claim 21 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the sausage is cooked by heating in an edible fluid.

Claim 22 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the sausage is cooked by boiling in water at a temperature in the range 60 to 80°C.

Claim 23 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said sausage is cooked in hot air and/or hot smoke.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage comprising a mixture of a meat emulsion and a mild yogurt, wherein said mild yogurt is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the meat emulsion and said mixture has a pH of about 5.5 or more, and wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the mild yogurt, and wherein said mild yogurt has a pH of 4.8 or more.

Claim 25 (Cancelled)

Claim 26 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 24, wherein said mixture comprises 60 to 90% by wt of said meat emulsion.

Claim 27 (Cancelled)

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 24, wherein said mixture further comprises up to 10% by weight of various spices.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 28, comprising a mixture of a meat emulsion and a mild yogurt, wherein said mild yogurt is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the meat emulsion and said mixture has a pH of about 5.5 or more, wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the mild yogurt, wherein said mild yogurt has a pH of 4.8 or more, and wherein said mixture comprises up to 10% by wt of a prebiotic additive.

Claim 30 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 29, wherein said prebiotic additive is inulin.

Claim 31 (Original) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 24, wherein said meat emulsion comprises red meat or poultry.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented) A method of making a cooked sausage which comprises forming a mixture of a meat emulsion and mild yogurt, in which mixture said yogurt is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the emulsion, forming the mixture into a sausage, and thereafter cooking the sausage; wherein the pH and proportion of the mild yogurt in the mixture is such that the pH of the mixture is 5.5 or more, and wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the mild yogurt, and wherein said mild yogurt has a pH of 4.8 or more.

Claim 33 (Cancelled)

Claim 34 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said mild yogurt is prepared by inoculating a milk mixture with a yogurt starter culture, monitoring the pH of the yogurt, and quenching fermentation of the yogurt when the pH reaches a desired value.

Claim 35 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein fermentation of the yogurt is quenched by cooling the yogurt to a temperature in the range -2 to 6°C.

Claim 36 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein said yogurt starter culture comprises a slow working yogurt culture.

Claim 37 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the mixture of meat and yogurt is formed into a sausage by extrusion through a stuffing horn into a flexible casing.

Claim 38 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said meat emulsion comprises an emulsion of finely comminuted meat and is formed by comminuting whole muscle, ground, minced or mechanically separated meat in the presence of said yogurt.

Claim 39 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 38, wherein said yogurt is added to the meat at a temperature of 0 to 6°C.

Claim 40 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 38, wherein said meat has a temperature prior to comminution of 0 to 8°C.

Claim 41 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the sausage is cooked by heating in an edible fluid.

Claim 42 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the sausage is cooked by boiling in water at a temperature in the range 60 to 80°C.

Claim 43 (Original) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said sausage is cooked in hot air and/or hot smoke.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, said milk product comprising an edible, alkaline additive to neutralize the acidity thereof.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 11, said milk product comprising an edible, alkaline additive to neutralize the acidity thereof.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 24, said mild yogurt comprising an edible, alkaline additive to neutralize the acidity thereof.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 32, said mild yogurt comprising an edible, alkaline additive to neutralize the acidity thereof.

Claim 48 (New) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mixture comprises at least 15% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 49 (New) A cooked sausage comprising a mixture of a meat emulsion and a fermented milk product, wherein said fermented milk product is substantially homogeneously dispersed through the meat emulsion and said mixture has a pH of about 5.5 or more, and wherein said mixture comprises 10 to 40% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 50 (New) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 49, wherein said mixture comprises at least 15% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 51 (New) A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said mixture comprises at least 15% by weight of the fermented milk product.

Claim 52 (New) A cooked sausage as claimed in claim 24, wherein said mixture comprises at least 15% by weight of the mild yogurt.

Claim 53 (New) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said mixture comprises at least 15% by weight of the mild yogurt.